



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 3, 2018

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Governor Baker Signs Bill Strengthening Commonwealth Gun Laws

Provides pathway to keep guns away from dangerous individuals

BOSTON – Today, Governor Charlie Baker signed H.4670, *An Act Relative to Firearms*, which will allow household members, or others in close relationships, and local law enforcement to file an extreme risk protection order (ERPO) petition with the court to remove firearms from dangerous individuals.

"Massachusetts' gun laws are a model for the nation, and creating an additional pathway to keep guns away from people unfit to possess them will make our laws even stronger," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "This law creates a responsible way to help prevent gun deaths and suicides while protecting individuals' second amendment rights."

"Our administration is committed to keeping our communities safe, and this legislation will give people an additional way to raise concerns if they are worried about a loved one possessing a firearm," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. "We appreciate the Legislature's work to pass this bill and the collaboration from law enforcement and key stakeholders to build upon the Commonwealth's strong laws."

Once an ERPO petition is filed, a hearing must be held within ten days, and if the court finds that an individual poses a risk to themselves or others, the court can order the immediate surrender of all weapons and the individual's firearm license. An ERPO can last up to one year.

The bill preserves the right of local police departments to continue to revoke or suspend firearm licenses based on a lack of suitability.

"With the passage of this legislation, Massachusetts once again leads the nation with the strongest and most effective gun laws in the country," **House Speaker Robert A.**

DeLeo (D-Winthrop) said. “This bill will prevent senseless tragedies and help keep Massachusetts’ children safe. I am sincerely grateful to Representative Decker, who tirelessly championed this bill, and would like to recognize the students who raised their voices on this life-saving measure.”

“This common-sense legislation gives family members the tools they need to help loved ones, and to prevent suicide and gun deaths,” **said Senate President Harriette L. Chandler (D-Worcester).** “Massachusetts’ nation-leading gun safety laws are made stronger by this bill. I appreciate the hard work of the advocates who fought for this, especially the thousands of young adults who spoke up about this issue.”

“This bill, by providing another tool to protect our residents and communities from gun violence, will save lives,” **said Senate Majority Leader Cynthia Stone Creem (D-Newton).** “By passing this law, we are answering the call of so many students, residents and advocates for a safer future.”

“We must do all that we can to keep our communities safe, and that includes keeping guns out of the hands of those who pose a risk of endangering themselves or others,” **said Senator Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland), Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.** “I’m proud to join with my colleagues in the Legislature to stand up for public safety in the Commonwealth.”

“Securing due process and safeguarding rights are of critical importance in this public safety law,” **said Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester).** “At the same time, it facilitates access to mental health and crisis intervention services for those who need them.”

“Massachusetts continues to lead the nation with the lowest gun fatality rates and the most sensible gun laws. This is yet one more step in ensuring that people have an additional avenue to help protect themselves and their family members when harm is apparent and imminent. I continue to thank Speaker DeLeo, who has forged this path — starting in 2014 — and now stands with us today,” **said Representative Marjorie C. Decker (D-Cambridge).**

“This legislation provides a tool for families to protect loved ones from harming themselves or others by preventing them from accessing a firearm in a crisis. I believe we have managed to strike a critical balance between public safety and due process. I am incredibly proud to have been able to play a small part in crafting a policy that I firmly believe will save lives.” **said Representative Harold P. Naughton, Jr. (D-Clinton), chair of the Joint Committee on Public Safety & Homeland Security.** “I would like to thank Speaker DeLeo for his incredible national leadership on this bill and for his commitment to firearm safety. Thank you also to my colleagues in the House for their support in passing this important measure.”

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